

RECKLESS RALPH'S

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP



A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A.

Price \$1.00 per year or ten cents a copy.

Ad. rates—1c per word, 25c per inch (about 30 words), Quarter page \$1.00,  
Half page \$1.75, Full page \$3.00. Display adverts., 50c per inch.

Four consecutive insertions for the price of three.

Vol. 10

May 1942

No. 116

## OLD CIRCUSES & WEEKLIES

By Joe Gantner

c/o De Luxe Studio, Boonville, Mo.

It was my good fortune to live near the circus grounds, when I was a boy, and as I look back on my youth, I find that old railroad circuses, and 5¢ weeklies have brought more color and beauty in to my life than anything. Oh! if we could only live over the excitements and thrills of our boyhood days. The old circus grounds were just across the pasture from our home, and we lived just far enough away to get the complete picture of the backyard of the circus. Many were the big circuses we saw roll into this old circus grounds. Let's see, there were The Adam Forepaugh and Sells Bros., The 101 Ranch, Sells and Downs, John Robinsons, Wallace-Hagenbeck and many others. These circuses were all big, and this was in the Golden Age of the circus, when they were all trying to out do each other in largeness and novelty. I do not remember the Great Barnum & Bailey showing on this lot, and I regret greatly not seeing Barnum & Bailey when they had 40 horses hitched to an immense band-wagon in their unusually heavy parade. Most circus people concede that James A. Bailey was one of the greatest geniuses of circus fame. The Great Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey Circus is the only circus to carry 100 double length railway cars, and thank goodness they are still going strong.

What a delight it was when an older brother came home from town, and said he heard that a big circus was going to be here on a certain date.

We anxiously waited for them to put up their bills, and to pass out their double page hand-bills and when the advance car arrived in town, and the circus bill-posters plaster the whole town with highly colored bills we went all over town looking at the different billboards.

Oh! What delight and imagination a young boy has. He magnifies and beautifies everything in his day-dreams and desires. How calm and peaceful the circus grounds look, with cows eating in the pasture. The evening before the arrival of the circus we saw the neighbor boy drive the cows out of the circus pasture, into the pasture in the rear, and we felt that the big show was coming for sure and we prayed that it did not rain on the tomorrow.

My brother and myself woke up around two o'clock in the morning, and we thought that the whistle of every train in the distance was the arrival of the circus train, and we anxiously looked over at the show grounds to see if we could see any lights, and about 3 o'clock we got up. Mother would also get up at that time and prepare a good early breakfast. Around about 4 o'clock as we solicitously watched the show grounds we saw men come into the gate and start to measure off the ground, and we listened with high strung nerves for the roll and rumble of the first big red wagon. At last we heard the roll of wagons coming up Locust St., and more and more men came on the circus grounds. Finally we saw big red wagons with eight horses attached to them rumble, rumble on to the show grounds, making that peculiar

sound that only circus wagons can make.

O'Boy! What a joy it was to sit in your front yard, under big shade trees, and see a big circus putting up its tents, and to see ten or twelve men driving stakes into the ground, with the even click, click of a clock. We often wondered what would happen if one of the stake drivers would miss his stroke and endanger the lives of his comrades. If I was a composer I would like to put into music the rhythm of a large circus, the clank of chains, the dropping of poles and stakes, and the shouting of teamsters as they threw small rocks at their well trained and heavy horses, and hearing them say "get up there Maud—move on there Susie!"

Soon the whole show grounds were filled with men, horses and wagons, and tents could be seen going up in all directions. First the eating, cooking, and stable tents, and over in a corner of the lot under a big oak tree was the blacksmith tent, which soon added to the clamor and din of the circus, the clank of metal meeting metal. The menagerie and dressing tents went up next, and we could see big pole wagons, animal cages, and a continuous flow of wagons moving around, and between the tents. Joy of Joys here came the elephants. How big and lumbery they looked. Throwing dust all over themselves, and weaving too and fro with that lazy don't care movement of mighty beasts. The poles of the big show tent were being set up, and the whole peaceful pasture of yesterday, became the tented city of today, what a transition? After watching the canvasmen start to pull the canvas up the high poles of the Big Top, we quickly dressed and went up town, as we wanted to see the parade from the main street of our town.

We always insisted that our Mother go up town and see the parade, but she claimed she would rather stay at home and cook the dinner, and what a dinner, fried chicken, corn on the cob, fresh vegetables, water melon. Good old Mothers, we don't appreciate them enough, but we sure miss them when they are gone. Mother always gave we kids about 25c apiece to spend circus day, and Father usually came home and took us to the afternoon performance. It was our delight

to go up town and mingle with the circus crowd waiting for a parade. Never have I seen such a democratic and good natured people as my fellow townsmen and farmers from all the surrounding country were on circus days. It was one big happy family waiting for the thrill of thrills, the big heavy circus parade that would soon roll down the main street of the town.

One of our greatest delights while waiting for the parade was to go into an old novelty store and look at the freshly arrived 5c weeklies, of which Nick Carter Weekly was our favorite. Oh, the beauty and richness of those old "blood and thunder" weeklies. How enthusiastically we looked at all the new ones. There was Buffalo Bills, Diamond Dicks, Young Wild Wests, Young Klondikes, Brave and Bold, Pluck and Luck, Tip-Tops, Secret Services, Liberty Boys of '76, Work and Win, and many others. A good part of our allowance would go to buy those thrilling novels with brilliant colored covers that showed parts of the action within as the author exactly described it. I have read plenty of these  $\frac{1}{2}$  Dime Novels in my day, and I believe I have received a lot of benefit in the perusal. They were clean and not full of sex as the modern stories.

Hearing bands playing in the distance, we hurriedly left the old store, and stood with the crowd expectantly waiting for the big parade to come. We could hear the rumble of the parade passing on another street, and finally we saw highly caparisoned horses and colorful riders on them come around the corner two blocks away. More and more big horses turned the corner, and we saw that they were pulling a big band wagon, and the World's Greatest Show Parade (as they advertised), was on. Will we ever forget the rumble, the rattle, the roar, of the circus parade. The beauty of its women, and the strength of its men. This young generation has missed a lot by not seeing an old fashioned circus parade, in all its magnificence and grandeur.

Cage after cage of wild animal wagons with bands and circus people on top of them passed us, and can we ever forget the beautiful sculpture work on the gigantic wagons, showing Roman and Greek Gods and Goddesses. Those big draft horses in 12,

8 and 4 horse hitches. They grouped them up according to color, grays, dappled grays, bays, etc. All circuses took a great pride in their horses, and I personally think that modern circuses make the biggest mistake of their lives by getting rid of parades and horses. Can we ever forget the glare of the slide trombone of the bandsman as he shot it at us over the top of the high band or cage wagon. A man on a horse would ride in the parade and yell, "Hold your horses the elephants are coming!" and the big brutes would soon lumber past, holding each others tails with their trunks. At last the Steam Calliope rolled by, making us all hold our hands over our ears at the screeking music, and smoking up the whole town. Then the parade was over.

We hurried home, and the old circus grounds were covered with tents now stretched like drum tops, with flags of all nations flowing from the top of the high poles. The Big Top looked immensely large, and the Menagerie Tent was being filled by the returning animal cages and elephants. Never in my life have I enjoyed the dinners, (lunch) as my Mother cooked them on circus days. Our Father came home early and took we kids to the afternoon performance, and what a beauty, and blare and blabble, there was to this wonderful display of feats of daring, skill, and comedy. You who have attended circuses can feel my meaning better than I can write it. I have never seen a circus yet that I have not received my money's worth, and besides we ought to pay something for the excellent parade we saw in the morning.

The old circus grounds were turned into a new addition, and houses are now where the old circus tents were. On summer evenings there comes to me a lonely feeling as I hear the children play where we used to hear the blare of the circus bands, and I think of the joys of the old days. Every year I make it a rule to go to the Ringling Bros. & Barnum-Bailey Circus, if it is in a near town or city, and I am thankful that there is still a Big Circus to go to. I hope that the management will not streamline it too much, for they might streamline it out of existence. We don't want the same fate to happen to the circus, that happened to old

5c weeklies. I think the publishers have tried to bring back the 5c weeklies time after time, but they will not succeed until they follow the old form and colored covers.

### NOVELNUT NONSENSE

WHEN WE BEHELD Bro. Maroske enjoying the superlative delights of citizenship by paying his income taxes, we could not but remark upon how successfully Paul camouflaged his consuming happiness.

HEADWORK: The ROUND-UP REMEDIES CO., Bro. Bragin, Prop., erred in filling BABY FOOD containers with CAT FOOD and vice versa. Troubles multiplied, but our Brother has a double-dome and uses it. Said he: "It's all okay. We use the same grade of dog-fish in both foods", and added that the Bragin "Kidney Pill" is now double-coated and can be used to sweeten coffee to offset the sugar shortage. Charles, our bonnet is off to you.

HARDSHELLED: Interviewed after being run over by a steam-roller, Bro. Pachon advised us that the steam-roller can be repaired. Stanley is in bed with a touch of flu.

WHAT WITH girl drum-majors kicking around in tights, and Beauty Queens, Hollywood Queens, Carnival Queens and such-like hopping about all over the map, Bro. Frye is not so sure but that he too could make-out with a Queen provided she milked cows. Now Bob, act natural. Your thoughts are over the hill and far away. Besides that there remains the question of Mary Ann Gash.

SANCTUARY ECHO: While gently separating two war-scarred tomcats engaged in a feline argument over the favors of his pet tabby, Minervy, we are pained to record that all three cats became tangled-up in Bro. Smith's auburn whiskers. Perhaps the spreading of a pound or two of Bragin's "PUSS-PASTE" over your pan might help, Ralph.

TOURIST: Bro. Austin contemplates whizzing once again across the Continent come Summertime. No witch on a broomstick ever cavorted against the moon as does Uncle Charlie when he breaks loose.

ROUND-UP BEAUTY SHOPPIE. Toe-nails filed, 10-cts. Bro. Pachon, Prop. (Adv.)

**WARNED:** Thus, a letter from Bro. Burns—"Lessen you hone fur trubel treat me with respex or meet a gassly end I'll plant you among the potatoes". And so we are banished from his presence. No more to call on him. No more to admire the surge of Bill's Adams-Apple up-and-down as he gargles apple-jack and then gargles some more to cool the inflammation. No more to weep with Bill when he bursts sadly into "Mother" songs, and dry-off with him over the stove-fire after dissolving in tears. Well, the singing WAS pretty terrible, but we must try live-along somehow with our last picture in mind of Bill's amazing expanse of back-view development ever fresh in memory's casket. We never knew that dropsy could strike a man from behind.

**AMAZING:** Bro. Jonas was seen making four distinct back-somersaults in mid-air. When interviewed, he stated that no special training was required. All that was needed was a banana-peel or an orange-pip and one's natural abilities would immediately become manifest.

**THIS WILL** be all of these scuttle-butt-drippings for the present. We feel like lying on the floor and yelling and kicking for ideas that will not come, to better our colyum, and feel that we may have to return to our old trade of peddling clams and tooting a horn. We would like to see our colyum flourish like a green bay tree and become noted for exactly nothing at all.

#### NEWSY NEWS By Ye Editor

Whoopee, how's this? Makes your mouth water to read about these old timers, doesn't it?

Highway Novels, same size as Beadles Dime Novels, or a hair smaller, No. 4, no date, but presume it to be in the early 60's, complete sold for 10c, one column to the page, 100 pages. Has illustration on front cover of woman tearing open a man's shirt, guess he is wounded. Looks like the battlefield to me. Light yellow covers. Title "The Bandits Bride," or "The Mountain Cavern." A romance of the Wild Highland passes of Italy! No authors name given. Published by Henry L. Williams, #12

North Williams St., New York, and put out by The American News Co., Nos. 115 117 119 and 121 Nassau St., New York. At top of front cover, between Highway and Novels, there are two pistols crossed with a black mask in the middle. Very interesting cover. The back cover shows 6 Nos. listed, but whether the 6th No. came out or not, I don't know. They go like this—No. 1. Black Hugh, or The Forty Thieves of London; No. 2. Tyburn Tom, or A Serpents Trail; No. 3. Boy Brigand, or The King of the Mountains; No. 4. Bandits Bride; No. 5. Monks Hall, or The Mysterious Enchanter; No. 6. Indian Joe, or The Prairie Robbers. No authors names given. Looks as if they are mostly English stories.

I hear there's a magazine out called "Dime Novel News." Anyone know any thing about it? If so, let's get acquainted.

Harold Holmes is hard at work on another fine article for the Round-Up. We're all waiting and holding our breath, for we all know it's going to be a good one.

Quite a few boys over in England are subscribers to the Roundup, so let's give them a little treat every month, with the listing of a rare English Blood or Penny Dreadful.

"Guy Rayner's Boys Own Journal," Vol. 1, No. 1, June 22, 1889. One penny. 16 pages, 3 columns to the page, well illustrated, size 8½x12 inches. Looks like a humdinger to me. Good stories and all, but a little different than our American stories. Here's the title of the story for a start, on page 2, "Too Utterly Good." A school story by George Emmett. Then on page 6 is "The Mystery of the Burning Island" by Charlton. Page 9, "Alec Ray, or A Struggle with the World" by Ernest Brent. Page 12, "A Bold Soldier Boy", a more or less true tale of the Scot's Greys, by the author of "Captain Jack", or "One of the Light Brigade." All the stories are continued in No. 2 and there on until the end of the tale. Front cover picture of No. 1 seems to be quite interesting and it fits George Emmett's story to a T. There are 8 or more scholars in front of the man teacher's desk, of which some seem to be surprised, while others have a hearty smile on their 'faces. Seems that some of the boys have been drawing pictures of

the teacher. (Ha, Ha, that brings me back to my own school days, when I received my first rat-tanning for drawing funny pictures of the teacher. Boy, were my hands sore for a while. Ye Editor). Coming back to the picture on the front cover. The teacher is leaning over his desk with a high hat in his hand. On each hat is printed "For a Good Boy." While in back of him one of the boys is pinning one of the hats to his coat-tails. Then it won't be long before the fun begins. I never read the story, but it looks interesting.

Albert Johannsen of Chicago, Ill., was down in New Orleans and Florida, a couple of months ago. He met Fred Singleton down in Coral Gables. He is still very busy on his book that he is writing, on the house of Beadle & Co., Dime Book Publishers. He still needs lots of data yet, so give him a hand, fellows. It will be well appreciated. Albert also visited Ray Caldwell on his visit to Washington, D. C., about 3 months ago. He's getting to be quite a traveler, isn't he?

Since I signed up in the Feb. 16th draft, I'm wondering who will carry on the Brotherhood and get out the Dime Novel Round-Up every month, should I be called. Any one who thinks they can carry on in my place, will drop me a few lines, telling me that they will carry on, that is if I should be called. I'm willing to do my bit, what ever it is. Since Ralph Smith turned the Brotherhood over to me in 1930, I've tried to do my best in bringing out Dime Novel Round-Up every month. I started with four pages, as you all well know, and then built it up to eight pages every month, while some months I've had as high as 24 pages. I know I've missed out a few times, such as when Mr. Fred T. Singleton was taken sick, and the Round-Up missed the years of 1932 and 5 months in 1933. Then again when I was down in old Philadelphia taking care of Uncle Billie Benners, when he was so sick, the Round-Up stopped from January to May 1940. But I've tried in every way to keep the Round-Up going. In order to keep it going, I've put money and time and everything else into it, to keep it above ground as best I could. I've tried to give a good dollar's worth to every body. Some of the boys say, I've spoilt it, maybe I

have, but the Dime Novel Round-Up, and Happy Hours Brotherhood has been everything to me, as well as to all the members, and those interested. I love it, so don't you? Long may it be carried on. While I'm here, I'll do all I can to keep it going. If anyone has anything to say, or any suggestions, or wish to take it over, if I'm taken in the draft, please write Ye Editor Cummings before it's too late.

#### NEW ADDRESS

Earle Barr Hanson, 812 S.W. First St., Miami, Florida.

Cheap Edition of Popular Authors, higher than No. 21. Half Dime Library, Nos. 1085, 1086, 1088.

Would also like to know the complete title and the first line of the text of either Pocket Novel No. 55 or New Dime Novel No. 621.

**ALBERT JOHANNSEN**  
2203 W. 111th St., Chicago, Ill.

#### INFORMATION WANTED

Will anyone having any novel belonging to the series Irwin P. Beadle's American Novels, Irwin's American Novels, or simply American Novels (but not Frank Starr's American Novels), please communicate with me? I would like to check, for a proposed publication, certain information as to covers, publishers, etc.

I also need the following information. The titles of the novels contained in Vols. II and III, American Library Tales, and in Vol. IV, Standard Library of Romance.

Would also like to hear from anyone having any Beadle's 15c Novels (not Starr's) below No. 17. Also any number of Irwin P. Beadle's Ten Cent Stories, Irwin's Six Penny Tales, and Base Ball Player for 1863, 1864, 1865 and 1868.

Any help that I may obtain will be very much appreciated.

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3 Vols. of "The Argosy," Nos. 424 to 454, 339 to 364, 322 to 338. Bound in Red Cloth, nice condition, 1889-90. Price \$2.00 a Vol. or all 3 for \$5.00. Some fine stories here.

Have over 100 copies of no cover Beadles Dime Novels, New Dime Novels, Richmonds 10c Novels, Staars 10c Novels, Munros, DeWitts, etc., at 60c each, \$5.00 per dozen, or \$38.00 per 100. Some fine stuff here, and nearly all are bound in nice bindings, too.

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Fisherville, Mass.

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**Work and Win Weekly**

177	180	181	201	213	217	220	225	226
245	247	248	251	253	257	261	271	282
286	296	298	299	322	338	342	346	353
354	356	373	374	381	391	393	408	419
423	428	421	429	431	435	436	437	439
444	448	449	450	453	454	457	459	470
473	474	475	484	485	491	500	504	505
506	524	527	528	532	536	547	549	552
571	580	581	586	599	601	603	605	610
615	625	628	637	639	640	643	653	667
673	671	681	685	690	700	711	718	708
721	728.							

**Wide Awake Weekly**

45	55	57	76	96	70	99	100	102	103	106
124	132	145	149	155	165.					

**Pluck & Luck**

423	165	316	491	173	174	198	309	320
329	335	429	464	523	473	262	889	915
954	959	961	964	978,	etc.			

**Boys of '76"**

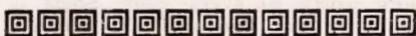
15	59	89	103	104	113	124	143	152	190
192	197	200	221	223	224	243	250	235	
148	211	237	244	312	316	319	330	337	
340	359	360	361	364	366	374	395	362	
436	482	507	512	534	568	609	632	641	
338	399.								

**Wild West**

42	50	93	185	225	237	243	244	246	247
249	252	253	258	260	261	271	301	315	
317	327	336	343	345	352	421	423	496	
498	517	575	580	188	331	350	404	432	
433	451.								

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- 222. Frank Merriwell Jr.'s Fight for the Right.
- 224. Frank Merriwell Jr.'s Athletic Team.
- 229. Frank Merriwell Jr.'s Repentant Enemy.
- 236. Dick Merriwell and the Burglar.
- 233. Frank Merriwell at the Cowboy Carnival.
- 243. In the Yellowstone.

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